

The appearance of cross-linguistic influence in the speech of a multilingual child¹

Javier Furus

University of Szeged, Hungary

DOI:10.14232/edulingua.2017.1.3

This paper explores the language usage of a multilingual child, Clau, who speaks English and Hungarian and has receptive skills in Spanish. Several utterances of cross-linguistic influence (CLI) can be found in his speech that need further exploration. The source of Clau's mixed utterances is analysed by looking into parental strategies used by his parents, applying a speech production model on his speech and looking for the source language of the CLI in his speech. Parental strategies are examined because they facilitate code-switching (CS) in the child's speech as his parents mostly rely on the move on strategy which enforces the child's multilingual self and encourages CS. Clau's speech is analyzed through a speech production model proposed by Green (1986) and the analysis proves that his dominant language is English and that it is a language that is always in an active state in his mind. Furthermore, the utterances produced by Clau are also analyzed by looking for different levels of transfer, like item, system and overall transfer, and through the application of the theory of iconicity. These transfers prove that the dominant language of Clau is English, as in his Hungarian speech he mostly uses that language as his source of word and structural borrowings.

Key words: multilingualism, cross-linguistic influence, code-switching, parental strategies, multilingual speech production model

1. Introduction

Multilingual families with small children speaking three or more languages are becoming more and more common nowadays. The reason for that in many cases is that families with small children move from one country to another in search for better job opportunities and with the means of settling in the new country. Such families may include small children who are still in the middle of the acquisition of their native language. In these families children are sometimes brought up spoken to in one language by one, and in another language by the other parent and in a third language by their community. The way these multilinguals acquire and use their languages gives rise to many questions unanswered by bilingual theories and provide ground for research.

Determining, for example, which is the dominant language in a multilingual's mind is a slightly more complex issue than in the case of a bilingual person. The question might arise whether the language the child is spoken to at home is the dominant language or the one they are most exposed to is. If it is the one the child is

¹ This is an improved version of my BA thesis entitled *Code-switching and cross-linguistic influence in a multilingual child: "Csináltunk egy presentation"*, April 2017.

spoken to at home, then the question is how one could determine which of the two is the dominant one. In either case one must look for causes, and this is more complex in the case of a multilingual person than in the case of a bilingual.

There is a great number of research done on multilingualism that discuss third or additional language acquisition and all the fields connected to it. These studies list the main concepts connected to multilingualism and also to the limitations of the field. One of the limitations of the field of multilingualism is that there is, because of the relative novelty of the field, no consensus over basic terms and that there is a great reliance on previous research done on bilingualism and second language acquisition. Because of this, many researchers have to rely on models built for bilinguals and apply them on multilinguals, with very little to no change.

Most researchers in the field of multilingualism apply bilingual speech production models by stretching them to multilinguals. Scholars must rely on this method because, technically, there are no multilingual speech production models. While this method of analysing multilingual speech works in the majority of the cases, a multilingual speech production model could also account for what happens in the multilingual person's mind when the language they only have receptive skills in is used around them, and they have to rely on their receptive skills.

In this paper I analyse the speech of a multilingual child named Clau, who speaks Hungarian and English and has receptive skills in Spanish. To do this, this paper, along with multilingual and trilingual theories, also relies on bilingual theories and models extended for multilinguals, because of the aforementioned mentioned limitations.

First, I define the main terms connected to the field of multilingualism with first defining multilingualism itself, then the terms third or additional language acquisition, cross-linguistic influence, multilingual approaches and transfer. Second, I define the speech production model proposed by Green (1986) with the help of De Bot's (1992) work. Third, I analyse Clau's speech applying these terms and models.

The purpose of this paper is to find out how the parental strategies applied by Clau's parents influence his code-switching, how his languages interfere with each other and to identify which, out of Clau's three languages, is the dominant one.

2. Literature review

2.1 Multilingualism

While most researchers define multilingualism as the ability of a person to use at least three languages (De Angelis, 2007, p. 8), in fact, there are no universal definitions for either bilingualism or multilingualism, as both terms can refer to people who speak two or more than two languages (Kemp, 2009, p. 15; De Angelis 2007, p. 8). For example, Myers-Scotton (2006) defines bilingualism as "the ability to use two or more languages" (Myers-Scotton 2006, p. 44) which is a definition, as Kemp (2009) and De

Angelis (2007) also point out, that makes no difference between multilinguals and bilinguals. This lack of distinction suggests that there is no difference between a person who speaks two languages and a person who speaks three or more. However, this assumption is not correct in every situation, as there is proof that multilingual speakers, in contrast to bilingual ones, are also influenced by their L2 and L1, while bilingual speakers are only influenced by their L1 (Cenoz et al., 2001, p. 22). Kemp (2009) in her article addresses this issue by listing the most common definitions of each term with the advantages and disadvantages of each one. She also highlights that it might be problematic to use the term bilingual to refer to speakers of two or more languages. (Kemp 2009, p. 15) Her article does not offer one universal definition for each term; instead, she lists several descriptions researchers have used in the past. She explains that the diversity among the definitions is the result of the novelty of the field of research of multilingualism and that researchers come from various backgrounds and societies with different form of understanding multilingualism (Kemp, 2009, pp. 11, 13).

In this study I use the term *multilingual* based on the definition of De Angelis (2007) mentioned above to refer to Clau, the subject of my research. Although he speaks only two languages, which would define him as a bilingual, I believe that his receptive skills in Spanish make him a multilingual, as he has no problem in understanding Spanish sentences. Kemp (2009, p. 19) also suggests that subjects with only receptive skills in one language can be considered multilinguals as their knowledge can also be counted as a language in their multilingual system.

2. 2 Second language acquisition

While my research is concerned with third or additional language acquisition, it is vital to define second language acquisition (SLA) as well as to get a clearer picture of the topic of the research.

Myers-Scotton (2006) defines SLA as the acquisition of a second language after childhood, regardless of the mode of acquisition, be it through education or informal learning (Myers-Scotton, 2006, p. 324). This definition is vital for this research, as De Angelis (2007) and Barnes (2006) highlight that many researchers use SLA as a term to refer to both bilingual and multilingual acquisition, which is a nonspecific understanding of SLA that is overgeneralising for the purpose of this research, which is why this paper relies on Myers-Scotton's (2006) definition.

Myers-Scotton (2006) also provides much valuable information on the language acquisition of bilingual speakers which, although not directly connected to this present research, gives the researchers an insight into the way a multicompetent mind works. Myers-Scotton (2006) in her book differentiates between adult and child language acquisition. She highlights that children can attain a native-like knowledge of a language and points out that it is a much harder task for adults to achieve the same result. Although she does not define a clear age limit for the group of child bilinguals,

she highlights that by the age of 9 the ability of acquiring a second or additional language greatly decreases. However, there is no consensus over this, as she points out too, the Critical Age Hypothesis puts the age limit at the age of 13, while some other researchers also argue that there might be no age limit at all (Myers-Scotton, 2006, pp. 36-37).

2. 3 Third or additional language acquisition

The basic framework of the current research is third or additional language acquisition. De Angelis (2007) provides an extensive overview of the basic terms and concepts connected to trilingualism and multilingualism. Her work points out why the term third language acquisition (TLA) is not appropriate to use and why third or additional language acquisition is a more appropriate term in this research. De Angelis (2007) believes that the term of TLA “places major emphasis on the third language at the exclusion of all the other languages also in the mind” (De Angelis, 2007, p. 11), which excludes the possible interference between the other two languages. Third or additional language acquisition removes the emphasis from the third language and takes into consideration the other existing languages too (De Angelis, 2007, p. 11).

De Angelis (2007) has not only provided the definitions of TLA used in this paper, but her work proved to be the most vital literature for the current research altogether. She collects and explains all the fundamental concepts connected to multilingualism in a well-organised and understandable fashion. Her work also elaborates on cross-linguistic influence and transfer with several examples and eloquent explanations, making these terms clearer and easier to understand. Apart from definitions, De Angelis (2007) also gives suggestions for future research on topics that need further exploration, such as multilingual speech production models.

Barnes (2006) goes into further detail about trilingual acquisition and different types of trilingualism. She lists several models of multilingualism from different researchers, out of which Hoffmann’s (2001) seems to be the most applicable. Hoffmann (2001) separates multilinguals into three different groups according to speech mode: monolinguals who use their three languages separately; bilinguals who use the combination of two languages and the third separately; and trilinguals who use all their three languages at the same time (Hoffmann, 2001, p. 16; Barnes, 2006, p. 30). Hoffmann (2001, p. 16), however, believes that the third group is very unlikely to exist in practice.

Barnes (2006) focuses mainly on how children acquire three languages at the same time. She also defines the fundamental concepts of multilingualism although some of her definitions lack detail and are mostly shaped for the characteristics of her research. Other notions that are used were not defined at all. Apart from this, Barnes provides a starting point for researchers interested in early trilingualism and the different approaches that can be used to facilitate the trilingual development of children,

like the one parent, one language approach, which led me to the works of Chevalier (2011, 2012).

2. 4 English, Hungarian and Spanish – Clau's languages

Clau speaks two languages, English and Hungarian, and has perceptive skills in Spanish. It is important to highlight the differences between these languages and discuss them here. Both English and Spanish are Indo-European languages while Hungarian is a Uralic language. That means that while English and Spanish are somewhat similar, Hungarian is very different from them. English and Spanish are both inflected languages although Spanish is more so. An inflecting language adds grammatical contrast like person, tense and number to a word through affixes without changing the class of the word (Crystal, 2008, p. 243) for example change in 'He *changes* his clothes every now and then'. An agglutinating language, such as Hungarian, adds each grammatical contrast through a "linear sequence of morphemes" (Crystal, 2008, p. 17) for example, *zsebekben* 'in pockets' where the noun *zseb* 'pocket' receives the plural suffix *-k* and the inessive suffix *-ben* (Rounds, 2001, p. 84).

Another difference is that while English and Spanish are analytic languages Hungarian is synthetic. In an analytic language the word order is usually SVO (Rounds, 2001, p. 253) and is much stricter, as changing the word order can greatly alter the meaning of a sentence (Crystal, 2008, p. 24) while in a syntactic language the word order is much less strict. Rounds (2001, p. 253) uses the example sentence 'The dog chased the postman' and its alteration 'The postman chased the dog'. In these examples we can clearly see that with just by changing the order of the words *postman* and *dog* the subject and, therefore, the entire meaning of the sentence changed (Rounds, 2001, p. 253). If the first sentence is translated into Hungarian, *A kutya üldözte a postást*, and then its word order is changed into *A postást üldözte a kutya* 'The dog chased **the postman**' (bold shows emphasis) the meaning of the sentence does not change, only the focus does. That is why, although the SVO word order is used regularly, Hungarian word order is usually referred to as a 'topic-comment structure' which is a structure where common knowledge is at the beginning of the sentence and additional comments are after it (Rounds, 2001, p. 254).

2. 5 Cross-linguistic influence, iconicity and code-switching

Cross-linguistic influence (CLI) is a umbrella term for all the interference there can be between the L1, L2 and L3, like "transfer, interference, avoidance, borrowing and L2 related-aspects of language loss" (Sharwood Smith & Kellerman, 1986, cited in De Angelis, 2007, p. 19). Although Barnes (2006) also talks about CLI, De Angelis (2007) covers it in greater detail dedicating a whole chapter to it, while Barnes takes a much

simpler approach explaining the concept in brief and then applying it throughout her work.

Cenoz et al. (2001) examine CLI strictly in trilingual acquisition. They highlight that while in the case of bilingual speakers it is the L1 and L2 that influence each other, it is all three languages that are in connection with each other in a trilingual person, which means that it is not only the L1-L2 but also the L1-L3 and L2-L3 that come into a two-way relationship (Cenoz et al., 2001, p. 2). This also supports the observation mentioned before that it is, indeed, not advised to use the term bilingual to refer to speakers of more than two languages.

Kazzazi (2011) approaches the topic of CLI from a more practical standpoint, explaining the utterances recorded by the author. Kazzazi's (2011) article is about two trilingual children who speak German, English and Farsi. Her research has a great number of examples of CLI from children in their relatively early stages of third language acquisition. Along CLI, however, she also includes the term of iconicity into her research. Kazzazi (2011) defines iconicity as the opposite of arbitrariness, as "content motivates the expression" (Kazzazi, 2011, p. 65), which means that when children want to express something they do it in a way so that what they say resembles what they actually mean. As an example she uses the utterance of her trilingual daughter "Ich brauche mix-cough!" (Kazzazi, 2011, p. 70), "I need cough-mixture", where the child, Anusheh, uses a post-modifier structure, common in Farsi, instead of a pre-modifier one, common in English and German as in "cough-mixture". The explanation of this, according to Kazzazi (2011, p. 71), could be that for Anusheh the Farsi post-modifying structure might be more iconic because it proposes an order, which Kazzazi (2011) describes as "determined before determining element" (Kazzazi, 2011, p. 71), which is more logical, thus more iconic, for the child. Elaborating further, Kazzazi (2011, p. 71) also explains that the child is more motivated to use this structure, because it lets her first name the object she wishes to describe and describe it after it was mentioned.

2. 6 Parental strategies

The issue of parental strategies or parental discourse strategies is important when examining the speech production of multilinguals. Barnes (2006) also touches upon the topic of parental discourse strategies in connection with code-switching and cross-linguistic influence. She believes that what matters when looking at a child's mixed utterances apart from "the amount and quality of the input" (Barnes, 2006, p. 19) that he or she receives is what parents do when they are communicating with their multilingual child (Barnes, 2006, p. 19).

Several researchers examine the effects of parental strategies on multilingual children. Chevalier (2012), for example, is interested in the development of two trilingual children who are brought up applying the one parent, one language strategy by

their parents, which is a strategy where each parent speaks in their native language to the children (Chevalier, 2012, p. 439). She is also interested in finding out what the motivating factors are for trilingual children to speak a specific language. Her finding is that despite the fact that both children are brought up applying the same strategy they do not develop the same way, that is, one of them is more motivated than the other to speak the language of one of their parents (Chevalier, 2012, p. 452). She makes the same observation in her later work, too. She suggests that the reason for the different development of the two children lies in the strategies that the parents apply when their children mix codes (Lanza, 2004, cited in Chevalier, 2012, p. 439).

Chevalier (2011) explains Lanza's (2004) parental strategies towards child language mixing in great detail. Lanza (2004) lists five strategies that parents use: *minimal grasp*, *expressed guess*, *adult repetition*, *move on strategy*, and *code-switching*. In the *minimal grasp* and *expressed guess* strategies the parents make it clear for the children that their utterance is not in the language they were expecting, thus they ask the children to clarify themselves by simply asking a WH-question or telling them that they do not understand what is said to them (Chevalier, 2011, p. 21). The difference between the two strategies is that in the case of the first, it is entirely up to the child to realize what is wrong with the utterance they have produced to their parents, while in the latter, in the *expressed guess* strategy, the parent repeats the child's utterance as a question in the target language (Chevalier, 2011, p. 22). *Adult repetition* is, in fact, the same as the *expressed guess* strategy with the only difference being that the parent simply repeats the utterance rather than repeating it as a question (Chevalier, 2011, p. 23). In the last two strategies called *move on strategy* and *code-switching* the children are not required to fix their utterances. In the first case the parent simply ignores the language mixing and moves on with the conversation in the target language (Chevalier, 2011, p. 24). In the second case, the parent does not simply ignore the mixings of the child but does not ask for correction either. Instead, they choose to go on in the target language and code-switch and repeat the child's utterance the way they said it (Chevalier, 2011, p. 24).

Chevalier (2011, 2012) in both of her works examines two Swiss trilingual children, Elliot and Lina. They are both exposed to the same three languages: French, Swiss German and English. The difference between the two children is that Lina is passive while Elliot is an active trilingual (2011, p. 236). Chevalier (2011) examines the children from the perspective of their parents' consistency in following the *one parent, one language strategy*, regarding the "amount of input" they received, the "variety of contact" with their languages, promotion of languages with the least input in conversations and the status of the languages of the children (Chevalier, 2011, pp. 237-238). She suggests that Elliot is more motivated to speak the languages other than the community's because his parents are consistent in the usage of the non-community language, provide equal input of each language, avoid using the community language at home, endorse the language the child is exposed to the slightest and provide a diverse contact with the languages of the parents (2011, p. 239). Lina, on the other hand

is less motivated because her father is not persistent while using his native language, French, and relies a lot on the community language and the mother tongue of Lina's mother, Swiss German, meaning she has an uneven input of languages (2011, p. 239). She, therefore, receives more input from the community language and her parents promote the language she is least exposed to a lesser extent than Elliot's parents, making Lina less proficient in it.

2. 7 *Transfer*

Although mainly focusing on SLA, Ringbom (2007) does not specifically differentiate L2 transfer from L3/4/5 transfer, which makes his research on the topic of transfer a valuable asset, even for those who are analysing the language usage of multilinguals. He categorises transfers into three levels of transfer: item, system and overall level.

Item level refers to the practice of a learner looking for what Ringbom calls "one-to-one relationships" of words in their source language and in their target language (Ringbom, 2007, p. 55). In the beginning this process of equating words happens on the level of form and not on meaning. This helps the learner at first to acquire basic vocabulary with the help of positive transfer, when words with similar forms have the same meaning. However, it often leads to negative transfer as well, as students often rely on words with similar forms but different meanings, words which are referred to by De Angelis (2007, p. 24) as "false friends".

The second level, system transfer, refers to the case when the learner does realise that there is a similarity in meaning in the case of two words in the source and target language, but does not realise the difference in the form. In Ringbom (2007, p. 55) this kind of negative transfer is exemplified with a Finnish example. The Finnish word *kieli* means both "tongue" and "language", which may cause negative transfer in the case of a Finnish learner of English and produce something like "he bit himself in the language" (Ringbom, 2007, p. 55).

Overall transfer, the last level of transfer, is a collective level that refers to the learner's observation of similarities between the languages they know in the form and meaning of each element, and in the similarities between their systems (Ringbom, 2007, p. 57). According to Ringbom (2007, p. 57) this explains why learning a language similar to the L1 of the learner is much faster than learning one that differs greatly.

2. 8 *Summary*

All of the literature read on multilingualism for this research helped to understand the topic better with the help of definitions and suggestions for multilingual speech production models. As it has been mentioned before, the work of De Angelis (2007) is the fundamental literature of this thesis. Her definitions of multilingualism, third or additional language acquisition and cross-linguistic influence, are the ones used

throughout my work. The parental strategies listed by Lanza (2004) and explained by Chevalier (2011) are used to examine their effects on Clau's speech and Ringbom's (2007) three levels of transfer is used to analyse Clau's utterances. The rest of the literatures serve as a base for fundamental terms and easier understanding of the issues discussed in the paper.

3. Research questions

The following sections are concerned with looking for the answers for three questions. First, how, if at all, do the parental strategies applied by Clau's parents facilitate his code-switching, second, how his languages affect each other in his speech, and third, which is the dominant language in his multilingual mind.

4. Methodology

The subject of the current paper is Clau, who was 13 years old at the time when the research was conducted. He is a multilingual child who speaks English and Hungarian and has receptive skills in Spanish. He is one of the three children of a Spanish-Hungarian bilingual family which moved to England when he was 7 years old. Up until that point he was spoken to in Hungarian by his mother and in Spanish by his father, applying the *one parent, one language strategy*, as it has been described by Chevalier (2012), and he went to a monolingual Hungarian kindergarten. Clau only spoke Hungarian both at the kindergarten and at home with his parents and siblings, and understood Spanish perfectly although he never spoke it and only his father spoke in it with him. He had just begun school when his father was offered a job in England, which he accepted, meaning that Clau could not finish his first year in a Hungarian primary school. In England he went to the local school where he was prepared for the English education system and the English language as he lacked former English knowledge. By now, he speaks fluent English; however, despite still using Hungarian at home with his parents, his knowledge of it has deteriorated. His language usage with his siblings has also changed, as they use a mixture of Hungarian and English to communicate nowadays. His mother still communicates with him in Hungarian and his father in Spanish and he always responds to both of them in Hungarian.

This research is based on two half-hour long voice recordings between the participant and the researcher and two five minute long conversations conducted by the mother and the father according to the instructions of the researcher. The conversations were semi-structured, focusing on asking questions about Clau's daily life, about novelties he encounters each day in school or after school. Each interview was conducted in Spanish by the researcher and the father, and in Hungarian by the mother, to see how each language affects the language use of the child. The study lacks a

recording where Clau was spoken to in English. In order to have data in English he was required to answer in English in the recording with his father.

The voice recordings were later transcribed and analysed by looking for cross-linguistic influence and code-switching. Only the utterances themselves were analysed, the way they were uttered, hesitation or stuttering was not considered during the analysis.

Chevalier (2012) and Kazzazi (2011) used a very similar approach in their research. Chevalier (2012) recorded the way multilingual parents and their children communicate and later analysed the strategies used by the parents and connected them to the utterance of the children. Kazzazi (2011) recorded the utterances of her own children but instead of looking at parental strategies she only analysed what the children uttered looking for cross-linguistic influence. This paper combines the methods proposed by the two researchers and observes Clau's utterances from both perspectives.

5. Results and discussion

5.1 Parental strategies facilitate code-switching

The reason why Clau has only perceptual Spanish skills can be traced back to parental strategies elaborated by Lanza (2004) and later by Chevalier (2011). Although this paper is limited in the time it covers of Clau's language development, at the age of 13 some parental strategies can still be seen being applied by his parents, which can still be seen relevant in his language usage.

Clau's situation is similar to Lina's in Chevalier's (2011) study. As mentioned before, he lived in Hungary until his 7th birthday and he was spoken to in Spanish by his father and Hungarian by his mother. His parents communicate in Hungarian with each other. The parents' consistence in their *one parent, one language strategy* is steady, unlike Lina's father's approach, because they never switch to either Hungarian or Spanish respectively when communicating with him. However, his only source of Spanish was his father and his paternal grandparents, leaving him exposed to mostly Hungarian and to an unequal input of languages. Although the parents strictly followed the *one parent, one language strategy* they mostly used the move on strategy with Clau when he produced mixed utterances. This means that even when he was spoken to in Spanish he was not required; therefore, he was not motivated to answer in Spanish, which explains why his Spanish is only perceptive. The parents followed the same strategies after moving to England, where Clau received a more balanced input of Hungarian, reducing the source to his mother, siblings and maternal relatives. However, upon moving to England Clau had to learn the community language, English, relatively fast with good proficiency in order to be able to perform in school. This means that the status of English in Clau's mind rose, making it the dominant language for him.

Clau feels more comfortable speaking in mixed utterances because he knows that his parents can understand code-switching, just as Grosjean (1998, p. 136) highlighted that multilinguals are more willing to code-switch when communicating with people with the same multilingual background. This code-switching or cross-linguistic influence is also facilitated by the parents' frequent application of the move on strategy proposed by Lanza (2004) and explained by Chevalier (2011). In Example 1 the move on strategy can be seen in the case of Clau. In this example Clau's mother asks him about his day at school and Clau responds with a code-switch in his sentence. His mother, instead of correcting him and disturbing the flow of the conversation, decides to go on with the conversation in her own code. Clau's code-switching is marked with italics and the move on strategy is marked in bold.

A. Move on strategy

- (1) MOT: Es ő, valamilyen modellről is beszéltél vagy mi, mit készítettetek a suliban? "And um you spoke about a model or something like that, what have you made at school?"
 CLA: Csináltunk egy *presentation* "We made a presentation"
 MOT: **Igen** "Yes"

According to Chevalier (2011, p. 23) the *move on strategy* reinforces the child's bilingual identity and communicates to the child that it is acceptable to speak in mixed utterances. This might explain why Clau could learn English fast and with considerable ease because he did not have to fear repercussions (Chevalier, 2011, p. 24) which means he could have fluent conversations in English without needing to rely on his yet limited English vocabulary.

In some cases his parents use an additional strategy called *minimal grasp* as can be seen in Example 2 to enforce the one parent, one language strategy which includes the adult requesting for clarification after code-switching to signal the need to use another code (Chevalier, 2011, p. 21).

B. Minimal grasp strategy

- (2) CLA: Kellett... vagy is, igen *powerpoint slash presentation* és kellett um, választani "We had to... I mean, yes, powerpoint slash presentation and we had to choose"
 MOT: Ezt **el tudnád mondani magyarul**, hogy micsoda? "Could you say what that is in Hungarian?"
 CLA: Um... *írópapír*? "Um... writing paper?"
 MOT: Nem, valami bemutató vagy ilyesmi. "No, a presentation or something like that"

In Example 2 Clau did not know the answer to the *minimal grasp* (*el tudnád mondani magyarul*), so the mother had to switch to adult repetition, which required her to repeat the utterance in the expected code. Clau's code-switching is marked in italics, his incorrect translation in bold italics, his mother's request for clarification in bold and the adult repetition is marked with an underline.

5. 2 *Language interference*

The reason why Clau produces these utterances in Hungarian can be traced back to two further reasons. It can be because of the iconicity of the English language for Clau. Another possibility is that Clau is, in fact, a kind of trilingual who, according to Hoffmann (2001), uses his language as a bilingual, meaning that he uses only two of his languages at the same time.

Clau could be considered a bilingual as in Hoffmann's (2001) term and that English is his language A, Hungarian is his language B and Spanish is his language C. This would explain why Clau's speech is only affected by English and not by Spanish. That means that his languages are intertwined as A+B and that explains the transfer from English to Hungarian. Hoffmann's model also accounts for the transfer from English, as she explains that with the emergence of a dominant language the number of possible combinations in the multilingual mind decreases considerably (Hoffmann 2001, p. 16). However, the theory in Hoffmann (2001) does not explain what happens to language C if it does not affect the others in any way. It does not account for the fact that while Clau's speech is not affected by Spanish he does interpret it and has no problem responding to questions and requests addressed to him.

Iconicity explains why Clau uses English structures in Hungarian sentences. With English being Clau's dominant language it is much closer for him to real life experiences than Hungarian structures. Just as for Anusheh to use post-modifying structures in Kazzazi (2011), it is also more natural for Clau to include the personal pronouns most of the time or to borrow English structures. However, iconicity is not concerned either with what happens with the least dominant third language. For that, this paper relies on Green's (1986) speech production model.

During this research I expected Clau's language to be affected by the language he is spoken to. As has been mentioned before, Clau has only receptive skills in Spanish and when he is spoken to in this language he answers in Hungarian. I did not expect him to switch to Spanish when I spoke to him in Spanish because I was aware that he could not speak but only understand it; however, I was expecting a degree of influence from Spanish to Hungarian. My theory was backed up by previous research highlighted in Hoffmann (2001, p. 6), who mentions the example of Elwert, who chooses his languages according to where he is or who he is speaking with, as well as in De Angelis (2007, p. 81), who proposes and explains the speech production model developed by Grosjean (1998). Grosjean's (1998) speech production model or Language Mode Hypothesis, as it is referred to by De Angelis (2007, p. 79), differentiates between monolingual and bilingual speech modes (Grosjean, 1998, p. 136) which are, according to him, activated on different occasions, for example, depending on who the bilingual speaker is speaking with, where they are, or what the context they are communicating in is. In both cases the language choice is facilitated by the environment and by the other participant of the conversation. Grosjean (1998, p. 136) believes that the language

modes are two endpoints on a continuum and that speakers are often on different sides of it depending on who they are speaking with. That means that if they speak with a multilingual of the same language background they are more likely to code-switch (Grosjean, 1998, p. 136) and produce mixed utterances. Since Clau is aware of the fact that his family is similarly multilingual as him, he is more willing to code-switch in his speech. He is aware that they understand mixed utterances without a problem. A case similar to Elwert's can be seen in Hoffmann (2001), with the difference that Clau does not choose to speak in Spanish when he is spoken to in it, but in Hungarian. However, neither Hoffmann's nor Grosjean's (1998) theory addresses the issue of what happens in the multilingual mind with the language that does not affect the speech production directly, which is Spanish in Clau's case.

To address the issue of Spanish in Clau's multilingual system this research turns to the above mentioned speech production model proposed by Green (1986). Green claims that each language in the mind can be triggered to various degrees (Green, 1986, p. 216). He suggests that each language is in either one of the three states distinguished by him: selected, active and dormant (Green, 1986, p. 215). The selected language is the one used to communicate and the one that navigates speech production, the active language is the one that helps processing the input and the last, the dormant language is the language that is rarely used by the speaker, a language which does not affect the speech production and the ongoing processing, a kind of passive knowledge (Green 1986, p. 215). According to De Bot and Schreuder, "one language is always dormant" (De Bot & Schreuder, 1993, p. 198). Explaining Green's (1986) model, De Bot (1992, p. 13) suggests that the selected language is the main source of words and the secondary one is the active language and although rarely, the third source can be the dormant language. De Bot (1992, p. 13) also proposes the idea of "parallel production" in which he suggests that the multilingual person forms the same sentences in the selected language parallel with the active language. During sentence formation lexical items are selected and surface structures are formulated too, which means that parallel production explains the appearance of code-switching and cross-linguistic influence in the speech of multilinguals (De Bot, 1992, p. 13).

The following section is concerned with the effects of each language, except English, on Clau's speech production. Unfortunately, no voice recording was available where Clau is spoken to in English by the time of the writing of this paper, which means that English had to be excluded from the list of languages observed from that perspective. There is one voice recording where Clau speaks English, which is used to examine his usage of English.

5. 3 The effect of Hungarian

In Example 3 the effect of Hungarian can be seen on Clau's speech. His mother speaks with him in Hungarian and Clau responds in Hungarian with code-switching. Clau's code-switching is marked in italics.

C. Clau spoken to in Hungarian by his mother

(3) MOT: ... a bemutatót azon (iPad) készítetted? "... did you make your presentation on that (on the iPad)?"

CLA: Aha, mert a *keynotesen* va- um tudsz csinál-, azt (prezentáció) mint a, um, mint a *pagesen* "Yes. because in keynotes there is - um you can make that (presentation) like, um, like in pages"

MOT: Aha.

CLA: És tudod mit? Még nem használtam, de van um a *numbersen*, azon tudsz csinálni *spreadsheet*. "And you know what? I haven't used it yet, but there is um, in numbers, in that you can make spreadsheet"

Separating the languages in Clau's multilingual system according to Green's (1986) terms can be challenging. The most straightforward categorization would be to say that Clau's selected language is, depending on discourse, either English or Hungarian, as these are the languages he speaks. His active language is always the one he is not currently speaking out of the two as, according to Green (1986, p. 215), the active language is the one that helps the multilingual in communicating. Clau's dormant language is likely to be Spanish, as he does not speak it and it has no effect on his production. This division is applicable for instances when Clau speaks with a Hungarian or an English speaker, as in the Hungarian example for this in Example 3. He has no problem understanding and responding to his mother's utterances. The high number of cross-linguistic influence we can see in his Hungarian speech is explained by De Bot's (1992, p. 13) parallel processing theory, which means that Clau creates his sentences in his selected language, Hungarian, parallel with his active one, English. When he cannot find a word or an expression in his selected language, Hungarian, he falls back to his active language, English, and borrows the appropriate word from that language.

5. 4 The effect of Spanish

When Clau speaks with his Spanish-speaking relatives, the previously proposed division has to be slightly refined. In examples 4 and 5 Clau is spoken to in Spanish by the researcher, to which he responds in Hungarian.

D. Clau asked about a magnifying device used to read books in Spanish

(4) RES: Con eso lees los libros, verdad? "You read books with that, right?"

CLA: Öö, még nem olvasok ott (iskolában), csak használtunk egy pár könyvet hogy gyakoroljunk vele, a Prodigyvel. "Umm, I don't read there (at school) yet, we just used it to read some books with it to practice, with the Prodigy"

(5) RES: Sólo poco tenías que estar ahí? "You had to be there only a little?"

CLA: Hát nem, nem kellett, de ma volt ez *a disaster day*, hát csináltuk, *activity*. Csináltunk egy házat, nem igazit, egy házat ilyen szívószálakból meg ilyesmik és akkor megnéztük, hogy, hogy kinek fog teljesen leborulni vagy szétmenni. “Um, no, we didn’t have to, but we had today this Disaster Day, um we did, um, an activity. We made a house, not a real one, a house out of straws and things like that and then we checked that, that whose will fall apart or get destroyed entirely”

When Clau is spoken to in Spanish, his Spanish cannot be categorized as a dormant language as Green (1986) specifies that a dormant language has no effect on ongoing processing (Green, 1986, p. 215), which means that perception does not take place with the dormant language either. Evidence for this can be seen in Examples 4 and 5. That means that in this context Clau’s active language is Spanish as Clau has perceptive skills in it and has no issues understanding it when he is spoken to in it. His selected language is Hungarian because he speaks with his Spanish relatives in that language. The dormant language in this scenario should, therefore, be English as it seemingly has no effect on production and perception. However, as it can be seen in Examples 4 and 5, even when Clau is spoken to in Spanish, his knowledge of English remains active as he heavily relies on it during his Hungarian speech production. That means that in Spanish context Clau has one selected (Hungarian) and two active languages (Spanish and English) and he has no dormant language.

5. 5 Usage of English

As mentioned above, no recording was available where Clau is spoken to in English by the time of the writing of this paper, which means that his English usage in an English context was not analysed. However, in order not to entirely exclude the analysis of Clau’s English usage, a recording where Clau speaks in English and his father gives him instructions in Spanish has been analysed instead.

E. Clau speaking English

- (6) FAT: Por qué te gusta ahí? (escuela) “Why do you like it there? (at school)”
 CLA: Because it’s a good school and I have made some friends there. There is one called Jacob who goes go-karting.
- (7) FAT: Es un clase especial en la escuela? “Is it a special class at school?”
 CLA: **Hát... umm, vagyis, umm...** yeah, it’s for people with special needs. “Well... umm, I mean, umm...”

In Example 6 it can be seen how Clau navigates his English knowledge. In this scenario his selected language is English, his active language is Spanish. Interestingly, as can be seen in example 7, Hungarian is active too in his mind which is likely because he is used to responding to Spanish in Hungarian. Although De Bot and Schreuder (1993) suggest that there is at least one dormant language, in this case Clau has no dormant language. Clau speaks fluent English and even though he has been spoken to in Spanish,

to which he usually responds in Hungarian, he finds it less challenging than expected to respond in English. This shows that two of his languages are always active and English is clearly the dominant one.

Concerning the three languages he has daily contact with, English is the one that affects Clau's language usage the most. He does not only borrow words, but also grammatical and syntactic structures from English and applies them in his Hungarian sentences. This concerns word order and whole expressions borrowed from the English language. The following examples are sentences which Clau most probably constructed from English.

5. 6 Structural borrowings

With the use of De Bot's (1992) parallel production theory it can be proven that Clau's dominant language is English and that he forms most of his utterances in English and Hungarian at the same time. The following list of structural borrowings, conforming to De Bot's (1992) theory, show that each sentence was constructed from English structures and are mostly direct translations of those sentences.

F. Structural borrowings

- (8) CLA: kellett **kitalálnunk** egy új csokit "we had to **make up** a new chocolate"
- (9) CLA: Ha egy könyvet **aláteszel** akkor tudja **elolvasni** neked. "If you put a book under it, it can read it for you"
- (10) CLA: játszottunk focit "we played football"
- (11) CLA: van **mint** 5 vagy 6 (tanóra) "there are, **like**, 5 or 6 (classes)"
- (12) CLA: A többiek **is** nem annyira tudták. "The others didn't really know it either"

In Example 8 and 9 Clau's Hungarian sentence was almost a direct translation from English to Hungarian. In Hungarian, the auxiliary verb *kellett* separates the verb *kitalálni* 'to make up' into the verbal prefix *ki-* and the verb *-találni*, so the structure in Hungary Hungarian looks like this: *ki kellett találnunk egy új csokit*. This is not the case in English where the auxiliary *have to* does not split *make up* into *make* and *up* and so the form remains intact. That is the reason why Clau did not split up *kitalálni* and left it intact just as he would have in English. In Example 9 he does the same, Clau did not split the word *elolvasni* 'to read' into prefix *el-* and verb *-olvasni*. In Hungary Hungarian the structure usually used is to put the prefix *el-* before *tudja* '(it) can' and the stem *-olvasni* 'to read' as in *el tudja olvasni* 'can read it'.

Clau used the same tactic of using English as the base of his Hungarian sentence in Example 10. In Hungary Hungarian, the expression 'to play something', for example, 'to play football' or 'to play basketball' is usually conveyed through a verb, for example *kosárlabdázni*, which translates to 'to play basketball', which means, that instead of the expression *játszottunk focit*, in Hungary Hungarian the verb *fociztunk* is the expression that should be used. This is the characteristic of synthetic languages which use synthetic

forms, common to agglutinating languages such as Hungarian, which use prefixes and suffixes to highlight grammatical differences and relations. Analytic languages, such as English and Spanish, however, use very little affixes, and grammatical relations are communicated through word order instead. In synthetic languages, and, therefore, in Hungarian, word order is less important, which means that using analytic forms is less motivated. In Hungarian both *játszunk focit* and *focit játszunk* mean ‘we play football’; therefore, the synthetic form ‘focizunk’, which means the same, is usually used. Clau systematically uses this analytic structure from English. He, in another case, said *játszottunk Unot* ‘we played Uno’ instead of saying *Unoztunk*.

In Example 11 we can see a system transfer. Clau inserts the word *mint* ‘like’ between *van* ‘be’ and 5, which is grammatically correct in English but not in Hungarian. The word *mint* does, in fact, mean ‘like’, however, only when *like* is used as a preposition for comparison, for example in ‘he is like a brother to me’. If it is used as a conjunction, then *like* translates to *vagy/körülbelül* in English ‘more or less’. This corresponds to Ringbom’s (2007) *kieli* ‘tongue’ example and shows that Clau uses English as the base of his speech production, because it is English where *like* functions both as a preposition and as a conjunction as in the translated sentence above. Clau did not realise that there is a meaning difference between the two forms of the Hungarian translations of the word *like*.

In Example 12 the word *is* ‘too/as well’ is the source of the interference. Clau correctly identified that English ‘either’ here stands for something similar to ‘too’ or ‘as well’; however, it is used in the negative sense, for example in “I don’t like it either”. He also correctly identified that this has to be negated in Hungarian too; however, lacking the word for it he instead directly negated *is* ‘too’ with *nem* ‘not’. The word used in Hungary Hungarian to refer to this is *sem*.

5. 7 Overall transfer

As it can be seen in the examples above, translating *like* into Hungarian can be a challenging task because of the vast amount of meanings the word can convey. It is not surprising, therefore, that it causes transfer and interference in Clau’s speech. In the examples below, we can see a third meaning of the word *like* where it translates to either *like to do something* or *like doing something*.

G. Overall transfer induced by system transfer of *like*

- (13) CLA: nekem jobban **tetszik** az iPaden **olvasni**. “I like to read on the iPad better.”
- (14) CLA: nem **tetszik** neki **tanulni** “he doesn’t like to study”
- (15) CLA: (Az iskola) Ahova most megyek az a Forest, ahova az **előbb** mentem az a... “(The school) Where I go now is Forest, where I went before is...”

In the Examples 13 and 14 above an overall transfer induced by the system transfer of *like* can be seen, marked in bold. Here, it is not only the meaning of the word *like* that

leads to transfer, but also the grammatical structure that follows it. In English *like to* is followed by an infinitive as in ‘I like to read’. However, the Hungarian *tetszik* ‘to like’ used by Clau in both examples is not followed in Hungary Hungarian by an infinitive, which in Hungarian is formed as verb + infinitive suffix *-ni*, as Clau used it, but by a noun, such as *tanulás*, ‘act of studying’, which translates into gerund in English. This means that *tetszik neki a tanulás* translates to ‘he likes studying’. Another way to make Clau’s utterance correct and keep the infinitive in Hungary Hungarian is to replace word *tetszik* with the first person singular form of the transitive verb *szeret* as *szeretek* ‘I like to’ in Example 13 and with its third person singular form *szeret* ‘he likes to’ in Example 14 because the verb *szeret* is followed by an infinitive in Hungary Hungarian. If the verb *szeret* is used then the personal pronouns *nekem* ‘to me’ and *neki* ‘to him/her’ have to be removed because they are only required by *tetszik*. This transfer happened because Clau did correctly identify that *like* in Hungarian has two very similar meanings, *tetszik* and *szeretni*, but he did not identify the difference between their forms, and that the two verbs require different complements. It is not possible to say which form Clau might have wanted to use, since traces of both forms can be seen in Examples 13 and 14.

In Example 15 Clau correctly identified that *előbb* translates into ‘before’ in English. However, while before in English can refer to something that has happened in the past in any timespan, Hungarian has two versions of it: *előbb* which refers to something that has happened not a long time ago and *korábban* which refers to something that has happened longer time ago.

5. 8 Insertion of personal pronouns

Clau does not always apply whole structures from English into Hungarian. He also inserts the personal pronouns in his Hungarian sentences even when they are not necessary. In Hungarian the personal pronoun appears only when “the pronoun is emphasized, contrasted, or referred to specifically” (Rounds 2001, p. 123), otherwise they are omitted. In English omitting the personal pronouns is very rare and only happens in imperative sentences where there is no subject as in “Look!” (Nelson 2001, p. 19) or in informal speech as in “Wish I could do something”. Clau applies the English rule of using pronouns in his following Hungarian sentences.

H. Insertion of personal pronouns

- (16) CLA: *jött egy barátom az ő testvérével* “a friend of mine came with his brother”
- (17) CLA: *ő az én legjobb barátom* “he is my best friend”
- (18) CLA: **Ti** most a **universtyben** jártok? “Are you going to University now?”

In Example 16 Clau uses the personal pronoun *ő* ‘he/she’ to refer to his friend. As mentioned above, the usage of this personal pronoun is not necessary as both the third person singular verb *jött* and the noun *testvérével* with the third person possessive suffix *-e* contains both the number and the person. Similarly, in Example 17 *én* ‘I’ can also be

omitted because the noun *barátom* already contains the first person possessive suffix *-om*. It is important to note though that *ő* 'he' cannot be omitted as it functions as the subject of the sentence. The same appears in example 18, where the verb *jártok* already contains the second person plural in *-tok*, yet Clau still inserted the second person plural *Ti* 'you' to the beginning of the sentence. In addition he also codeswitched and used an incorrect suffix. University is *egyetem* in Hungarian and the suffix *-be* should have been used instead.

5. 9 Summary

This section has been concerned with answering the research questions proposed in section 3. First, it has been established that parental strategies facilitate code-switching because the move on strategy applied by Clau's parents does not alter the flow of the conversation even when mixed utterances are present. Second, it has been shown how Clau's languages influence one another and that English is the most prominent one. Third, it has been proven with examples that Clau's dominant language is English, as he mostly relies on that language when forming his sentences.

5. Conclusion

This paper examined the language usage of a multilingual child named Clau. He lives in England and he speaks English and Hungarian and has receptive skills in Spanish. It has examined the language usage of the child, how and why his languages affect each other. The paper has listed three reasons why cross-linguistic influence appears in Clau's speech.

First, the parental strategies described by Lanza (2004) and applied by Clau's parents facilitate his code-switching. Because his parents mostly apply the move on strategy with him to keep up the flow of the conversation, he feels more comfortable to speak in mixed utterances. Second, Clau's language usage was examined applying Hoffmann's (2001) theory of multilingualism and Grojsean's (1998) speech production model, both of which provided useful information, but did not explain the issue of what happens with Spanish when Clau is spoken to in it. For this, Green's (1986) speech production model was used and it has been shown that Clau's languages can be divided into selected, active and dormant categories according to context. Spanish is in either the active or the dormant state in his mind, explaining why he is able to understand but not speak Spanish. Hungarian and English are always in either the active or the selected state in Clau's mind, often causing cross-linguistic influence in his Hungarian speech, which is explained by De Bot's (1992) parallel processing theory. Third, it was proven that English is Clau's dominant language. It has been established that English is always active in his mind and that this fact is the cause of cross-linguistic influence in his speech. Applying Ringbom's (2007) theory it has been shown that apart from code-

switching there are also structural borrowings and negative transfer from English to Hungarian in his speech.

This paper has been concerned only with Clau's current language usage and its causes. It could be the base of further research to look at the language development of a multilingual child similar to Clau's from the very early age until late childhood. This would provide further insight into the development of multilingual children in general.

References

- Barnes, J. D. (2006). *Early trilingualism: A focus on questions*. Clevedon: Multilingual Matters.
- Cenoz, J., Hufeisen, B., & Jessner U., (Eds.) (2001). *Cross-linguistic influence in third language acquisition: Psycholinguistic perspectives*. Clevedon: Multilingual Matters.
- Chevalier, S. (2011). *Trilingual language acquisition: Contextual factors influencing active trilingualism in early childhood*. Zurich: University of Zurich, Habilitation dissertation.
- Chevalier, S. (2012). Active trilingualism in early childhood: The motivating role of caregivers in interaction. *International Journal of Multilingualism*, 9(4), 437-454.
- Crystal, D. (2008). *A dictionary of linguistics and phonetics*. Oxford: Blackwell Publishing.
- De Angelis, G. (2007). *Third or additional language acquisition*. Clevedon: Multilingual Matters.
- De Bot, K. & Schreuder, R. (1993). Word production and the bilingual lexicon. In: B. Weltens and R. Schreuder, (Eds.) *The bilingual lexicon* (pp.191-214). Amsterdam: John Benjamins.
- De Bot, K. (1992). A bilingual production model: Levelt's speech production model adapted. *Applied Linguistics*, 13(1), 1-24.
- Green, D. W. (1986). Control, activation, and resource: A framework and a model for the control of speech in bilinguals. *Brain and Language*, 27(2), 210-230.
- Grosjean, F. (1998). Studying bilinguals: Methodological and conceptual issues. *Bilingualism: Language and Cognition*, 1(2), 131-149.
- Hoffmann, C. (2001). Towards a description of trilingual competence. *International Journal of Bilingualism*, 5(1), 1-17.
- Kazzazi, K. (2011). Ich brauche mix-cough: Cross-linguistic influence involving German, English and Farsi. *International Journal of Multilingualism*, 8(1), 63-79.
- Kemp, C. (2009). Defining multilingualism. In: L. Aronin & B. Hufeisen, (Eds.) *The exploration of multilingualism*, Amsterdam: John Benjamins, 11-26.
- Lanza, E. (2004). *Language mixing in infant bilingualism: A sociolinguistic perspective*. Oxford: Oxford University Press.
- Myers-Scotton, C. (2006). *Multiple voices*. Malden: Blackwell.
- Nelson, G. (2001). *English: An essential grammar*. London: Routledge.

- Ringbom, H. (2007). *Cross-linguistic similarity in foreign language learning*. Clevedon: Multilingual Matters.
- Rounds, C. (2001). *Hungarian: An essential grammar*. London: Routledge.
- Sharwood Smith, M., & Kellerman E. (Eds.) (1986). *Crosslinguistic influence in second language acquisition*. New York: Pergamon Press.